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Prevention of armed conflict

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

A regional-global security partnership: challenges and opportunities

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In paragraph 1 of its resolution 1631 (2005) the Security Council expressed its determination to take appropriate steps to the further development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. In paragraph 10 of the same resolution it invited me to submit a report on the opportunities and challenges that this cooperation faces in the future.

The resolution reflects the growth of interaction between the United Nations and partner organizations. This includes annual high-level meetings that I convene with regional and other intergovernmental organizations, along with recent meetings of the Security Council with regional organizations. The culmination of such effort has been Security Council resolution 1631 (2005), the report of the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

The opportunities before us lie in the establishment of a more effective partnership operating in close cooperation with the Security Council, based on a clear division of labour that reflects the comparative advantage of each organization. As important is the development of a programme of action for capacity-building across the globe.

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The challenges to be addressed are clarification of the identity and role of each member in this partnership and a programme of action for capacity-building to ensure more equal ability among United Nations regional and other partners around the world to assist in the maintenance of peace and security. To this end, I submit a number of recommendations in the report.

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I. Introduction

1. The Security Council in its resolution 1631 (2005) invited me to report on the opportunities and challenges facing the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. The present report is submitted in response to that request. I am submitting it also to the General Assembly as my recommendations regarding the prevention of armed conflict are a response to paragraph 37 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 57/337.

2. In its resolution, the Council also expressed its intention to hold regular meetings with regional and subregional organizations to strengthen cooperation in maintaining peace and security, ensuring that these coincide with the annual high-level meetings that I convene with heads of regional and other intergovernmental organizations. This will be achieved this year with both the seventh high-level meeting and the fourth Security Council meeting on the issue to be held in September.

3. Considerable importance has been attached to the potential for a strengthened relationship between the United Nations and partner organizations. At the fifth high-level meeting we agreed on a new vision of global security, one that draws upon the resources and legitimacy of a network of effective and mutually reinforcing multilateral mechanisms, both regional and global.

4. That vision was elaborated upon at the sixth high-level meeting. The challenge now is to articulate a common vision for a global architecture, interlocking such capacities based on comparative advantages and clear division of labour. We must intensify our dialogue on the nature of that system, always recognizing the central role of the Security Council, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

5. Realization of this vision will not be achieved easily. It will require effort in organizational planning on all our parts. Nor will the process of strengthening the operational partnership be devoid of political implications. I hope that Member States can assist in contributing to this end. The present report is designed as a step towards that goal.

II. Development of the partnership (1994-2006)

6. It has long been recognized that the United Nations is not equipped to handle every crisis in the world on its own. It is acknowledged that a partnership between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations should be developed if peace and security are to be maintained.

A. Early moves towards the partnership

7. Reflecting this new recognition, initiatives were taken in the early 1990s towards building such a partnership. In January 1992 the Security Council invited the Secretary-General to prepare recommendations on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping. This

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was to cover the contribution by regional organizations, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, in helping the work of the Council.[1]

8. In his response to that request, my predecessor noted that, while the Council would continue to have primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security, cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations would not only lighten the burden of the Council but would also contribute to deeper participation of regional actors in international affairs.[2] That was the spirit that generated the momentum to develop a regional-global security partnership.

9. The Security Council, in January 1993, invited regional organizations to study ways of strengthening their functions in peace and security and improve coordination with the United Nations.[3] The Secretary-General signalled his intention to develop guidelines governing such cooperation. That initiative was welcomed by the General Assembly.[4] That was followed in 1994 by a Declaration of the General Assembly stating that regional arrangements or agencies in peace and security should be encouraged, and, where appropriate, supported by the Security Council.[5]

10. These early developments laid the basis for the momentum towards building the regional-global partnership for peace and security of today. That movement has taken two important forms: high-level meetings chaired by the Secretary-General and recent thematic debates held by the Security Council.

B. High-level meeting process

11. Six high-level meetings have been convened between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations from 1994 to 2005. The doubling of attendance testifies to the importance partner organizations attach to the process. Highlights of the process have been the following:

(a) Agreement on a pragmatic and flexible approach to the partnership;

(b) Recognition of the need for impartiality by partner organizations in dealing with conflicts in their regions;

(c) Agreement on 13 modalities for cooperation on conflict prevention;

(d) Identification of eight guiding principles for cooperation in peacebuilding;

(e) Recognition that interested regional and subregional organizations would pursue joint activities under Chapter VIII of the Charter, while other intergovernmental organizations would partner with the United Nations under its other provisions, reflecting the distinction made by the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change[6] to that effect;

(f) Establishment of six working groups to prepare the high-level meetings more carefully at the working level.

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[1] S/23500.
[2] A/47/277-S/24111, para. 64.
[3] S/25184.
[4] General Assembly resolution 48/42, para. 63.
[5] General Assembly resolution 49/57, annex, para. 5.
[6] A/59/565.

12. Furthermore, at the sixth high-level meeting held in July 2005, a study was commissioned on the capacities of partner organizations to cooperate with the United Nations in peace and security. To accelerate progress in strengthening the partnership, participants also agreed to meet annually, to coordinate meetings with the relevant thematic debates of the Security Council, and to establish a standing committee to act as an initiator of ideas, a mobilizer of political will and sustainable direction, and a monitor of implementation of decisions made.[7]

C. Thematic meetings of the Security Council

13. In welcoming the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace" (A/50/60-S/1995/1), the Council in 1995 reaffirmed the importance it attached to the role that regional organizations and arrangements could play in peace and security. It underlined the need for effective coordination between their efforts and those of the United Nations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.[8]

14. It was not, however, until later that the Council took up the theme of cooperation with regional organizations. Upon completion of the fourth high-level meeting in February 2001, the Council issued a statement further encouraging the United Nations and partner organizations to establish consultative processes to ensure that peace settlements mediated by them included commitments by the parties to concerted action in different areas of peacebuilding.[9]

15. Since then the Council has convened three meetings with regional and subregional partners.

16. The first meeting was held in April 2003. The Council discussed the response to new challenges to international peace and security. Despite a feeling of crisis at the time, the Council agreed that its primary responsibility and authority had to be reaffirmed and that a dynamic relationship between the regional organizations and the Council needed to be developed, based on the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.[10]

17. The second meeting was held in July 2004. The Council acknowledged the important role that regional organizations could play in the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts. Coordinated efforts in stabilization processes should be based on complementarity and on responding to the comparative advantages of regional organizations.[11]

18. The third meeting was held in October 2005. The Council adopted its first resolution on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, resolution 1631 (2005), which is the subject of review in section E of the present report.

[7] A/60/341-S/2005/567, annex 1, para. 7.
[8] S/PRST/1995/9.
[9] S/PRST/2001/5.
[10] S/PV.4739.
[11] S/PRST/2004/27.

D. Current operational cooperation

19. As a result of the guidance given by the high-level meetings and Security Council meetings, some significant operational cooperation in the area of peace and security has been developed between the United Nations and partner organizations. The sections below describe the measures currently being undertaken in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and special areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, the protection of civilians and natural disasters.

Conflict prevention

20. While conflict prevention remains the primary responsibility of Member States, most regional and subregional organizations undertake conflict prevention measures. In Africa the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the South African Development Community (SADC), and in Europe the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU) maintain conflict prevention centres with early warning systems. Regional efforts are context-specific and reflect different norms, priorities and resources. Often regional agencies have credibility as local actors to encourage their members to adhere to accepted international and regional norms. The international community benefits from the innovative approaches of regional organizations and from the knowledge of effective prevention strategies that are acquired in one region and that could be shared elsewhere in the world.

21. The preliminary results of the survey on the capacities of partner organizations conducted by the United Nations University Comparative Regional Integration Studies programme have shown that capacity exists in conflict prevention both in constitutional mandates and operational mechanisms in all such organizations. This holds great potential for building an effective interactive process between the United Nations and its partners.

22. The United Nations experience in conflict prevention should be shared with partner organizations. This idea is elaborated upon in my 2006 report on conflict prevention, which has been submitted to the General Assembly. The report concludes with a number of recommendations that include suggestions for addressing systemic sources of tension, strengthening global norms and institutions for peace, reducing specific risk factors and enhancing national infrastructures of peace.

23. I also recently sent an interagency team to ECOWAS and the Organization of American States (OAS), with Canadian support, with a view to exploring ways in which the United Nations could establish partnerships with those organizations. In response to paragraph 37 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 57/337 and decisions taken at the third high-level meeting in 1998, the missions built on ongoing United Nations activities and discussed joint action plans for the future. I believe that similar missions to other partner organizations might be of considerable importance in enhancing practical advances in this field.

24. Respect for human rights is also central to conflict prevention. Most conflicts have been preceded by periods of their systematic violation, abuses of human rights and gradual degradation of institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. Building regional capacity for protection, especially resilient institutions, has

become one of the strategic goals of our partnership with subregional organizations. This partnership has been sustained through the establishment of regional offices around the world and a subregional centre for human rights and democracy in Central Africa based in Yaoundé.

25. The United Nations is willing to engage in dialogue with partner organizations on how to advance the process of building a global-regional mechanism in conflict prevention. For instance, the desk-to-desk dialogue on conflict prevention between the United Nations and the European Commission was launched in Brussels in 2003. Since then, four dialogues have taken place. The sixth United Nations-OSCE staff-level meeting was organized in May 2006. A first desk-to-desk dialogue between the United Nations and the Council of Europe took place at United Nations Headquarters in 2005. These consultations could be expanded to other regions. Other examples of potential synergy are the early warning and response systems in IGAD and ECOWAS, whose experiences could be shared with others.

26. The work of the United Nations system in conflict prevention has evolved to include an integrated, multisectoral approach, creating opportunities for interaction at the regional level. The United Nations is exploring new ways to partner with the development sectors of regional and subregional organizations. Utilizing the comparative advantages of participating partner organizations, future consultations will introduce new processes for building national capacities for mediation, conflict analysis, conflict-sensitive development, as well as dialogue and decision-making processes in fragile and post-conflict societies, supported both by partner organizations and the whole United Nations system.

Peacemaking

27. Through my good offices the United Nations has sought to promote solutions to disputes in all regions of the world, while recognizing the unique requirements of each. I wish at this juncture to acknowledge with appreciation how often regional organizations are in the lead in peacemaking. It is my expectation that the United Nations will be able to continue to support them in these endeavours in the future.

28. Special mediators remain the primary means by which the United Nations can assist Member States to resolve conflicts peacefully. In this context, the United Nations has worked closely with IGAD on Somalia and the Sudan; ECOWAS on Sierra Leone and Liberia; and the African Union on Burundi, the inter-Congolese dialogue and the convening of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the conference on Darfur in the Sudan. We have also worked closely with the EU on the elaboration of the agreement on the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, and with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Cambodia, East Timor and Myanmar, as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and OSCE in the Balkans subregion.

29. While much progress has been achieved, many challenges remain. First is the challenge for regional organizations and the United Nations to coordinate effectively at the operational level. I have often stated that the United Nations claims no monopoly on the settlement of disputes. There may be times when it would be better for other mediators such as those from regional partners to handle a given situation.

30. The second challenge is the issue of capacity. Not all partner organizations are equally endowed. Sometimes the best-placed organizations may lack the capacity to support the peacemaking initiative effectively. Peacemaking does not only require the appointment of an effective peacemaker; often many technical experts and logistics and financial support are required to support a peacemaking initiative over a few years. I therefore welcome the efforts of Member States and regional agencies and arrangements to share resources and jointly coordinate our activities in our common purpose to resolve conflict peacefully.

31. I recommended to the General Assembly last year that the mediation capacity of the Department of Political Affairs be strengthened with a dedicated unit. The Department's core mediation support capacity, for which the General Assembly approved start-up resources, will serve as a repository of past experience and assist partner organizations to resolve conflict peacefully. This will provide greater opportunity for the United Nations to liaise with partner organizations in peacemaking. To strengthen our cooperation, the Department will soon launch a systematic region-by-region analysis of mediation experiences in order to draw practical conclusions and develop useful tools.

32. The Department is also developing a web-based peacemaking databank tool for international peacemaking professionals, as part of an effort to reinforce its capacity to provide timely advice in the resolution of international disputes and internal conflict. The site will contain peace agreements, lessons on the management of peace processes and operational guidance for future efforts of peacemaking practitioners. It will be a useful tool to our regional and other intergovernmental partners engaged in peacemaking efforts around the world.

Peacekeeping

33. Regional organizations have become important contributors to international efforts to assist States in the transition from armed conflict to sustainable peace. There has recently been dramatic growth in partners' engagement in peacekeeping as one crucial element of this wider activity, particularly in Africa and Europe.

34. I welcome this engagement. It reflects, first, the sustained global demand for peacekeeping. Second, it is testimony to the commitment of the United Nations membership to the multilateral management of peace and security and to our collective will to support societies emerging from conflict. Third, it provides an opportunity for us to improve support to those societies emerging from armed conflict through peacekeeping. The contribution regional actors bring to this global effort may include unparalleled knowledge of a particular region, expertise in a particular issue area, and personnel and material resources.

35. A representative list of regional and other partners that have collaborated politically or co-deployed with United Nations peacekeeping operations includes the AU in Burundi, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan; ECOWAS in Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Liberia; the EU in Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan; the Commonwealth of Independent States and OSCE in Georgia; NATO in Afghanistan and Kosovo; and OAS in Haiti.

36. Operational cooperation has taken place in many diverse ways. In some cases, such as in Liberia in 2003, we have seen a transition from a regional operation — in

that case ECOWAS — to a United Nations operation. In other contexts, such as Kosovo or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we have coordinated separate operations side by side. In Haiti, OAS has provided support within the context of a United Nations-led mission. In Darfur, Sudan, ongoing United Nations-African Union peacekeeping cooperation has taken a new dimension in the context of United Nations support for an African Union-led operation, the African Union Mission in the Sudan. The latest example of the diversity of potential models of operational cooperation between United Nations peacekeeping and regional entities is the EU Force operation to provide support to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Congolese people during the forthcoming election period.

37. The hallmarks of these diverse experiences are multifold. The first, the continuity of partnership: ongoing dialogue and engagement across the range of peace and security challenges enable our operational cooperation in specific contexts. The second feature is flexibility: the fact that we cooperate in diverse ways points to collective recognition that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, either to the diagnosis of peace and conflict challenges or the proposed prescriptions to address them. A third hallmark is openness: transparency before the perspectives and preferences of the peoples we seek to assist through the deployment of international peacekeeping operations. If we do not reflect their concerns and their hopes, then our collective endeavour, whatever form it takes, will be fruitless.

38. I suggest three broad goals for the coming years:

- We should promote capacity. At a time of sustained peacekeeping demand, particularly in Africa, increased regional capacity for effective action, undertaken within the framework of the Security Council's primary responsibility for peace and security, can enhance the ability of the international community to respond to conflict.
- We should target our capacity-building efforts. This includes common standards on the principles and practice of peacekeeping so that we provide consistent, effective support wherever peacekeeping operations are deployed and we can work productively together on the ground.
- Most importantly, we should reinforce a collective approach to security. The development of regional capacity should lead to a net gain in the promotion of peace and security; it does not absolve any of us of our responsibilities under the Charter to assure an effective response to conflict, wherever it occurs. At times, a regional response may be the best means to prevent or end conflict; at other times, direct involvement of the United Nations, either alone or with regional partners, may be the only way to act effectively.

Peacebuilding

39. The recent positive developments with regard to peacebuilding stem from the recognition that security, development and human rights are the pillars of the United Nations system and foundations for sustainable peace. A key development in this regard is the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, whose main purpose is to bring together relevant actors to marshal resources and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.

40. There is an evident regional dimension to peacebuilding, and the enabling resolution[12] makes direct reference to partner organizations and regional financial institutions as key stakeholders in the peacebuilding process in countries emerging from conflict. Regional and subregional organizations are expected to play a significant role in support of the work of the Commission. In particular, regional organizations will help ensure that a coordinated and integrated approach is taken to address the peacebuilding needs of those countries under consideration.

41. Regional organizations must play a significant role in the new Peacebuilding Commission, and I hope that the Security Council might consider ways in which it could make an appropriate contribution.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

42. In various forums, the United Nations continues to recognize the importance of regional approaches to disarmament and security, affirming that global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other and should be pursued simultaneously to promote regional and international peace and security.

43. I welcome the fact that regional and subregional cooperation to stem the flow of illicit weapons across national borders is on the rise. I also welcome the collaborative efforts of the United Nations and regional stakeholders to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, build necessary capacities and provide required assistance.

44. I also consider that significant progress can be achieved in promoting the universality and full implementation of multilateral disarmament treaties related to weapons of mass destruction, as well as in facilitating efforts aimed at the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The close relationship between the United Nations and intergovernmental partner organizations offers an example of potential synergy and success.

45. I support the United Nations dialogue with interested partners on measures to combat the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery. I believe that such measures are key components of the efforts to prevent the access of non-State actors to weapons of mass destruction-related materials and technology, including in the context of the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). I also believe that further progress can be achieved through United Nations interaction with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to design and undertake outreach activities aimed at raising awareness and, as appropriate, facilitate the provision of assistance and cooperation to strengthen States' national capacity to implement their obligations.

46. The United Nations possesses a wealth of expertise, experience and knowledge in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, which it is ready to share. I also believe that it is important that the synergies between regional and subregional organizations and existing United Nations regional mechanisms and infrastructure, including the three United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament, be

[12] General Assembly resolution 60/180, paras. 7 (e), 11 and 19.

fully utilized with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring a greater impact of disarmament and non-proliferation measures.

Protection of civilians

47. Today's conflicts have developed regional dimensions and created new dynamics that extend well beyond the border of a single country. Neighbouring States and regional organizations have already played an essential role: facilitating mediation and brokering peace agreements; supporting the demobilization of armed groups; controlling the proliferation of small arms; and addressing the needs of the displaced. Other protection issues such as human trafficking and the illegal exploitation of natural resources are not confined to State control and require regional mechanisms and commitments to be properly addressed. For example, the African Union Mission in the Sudan currently works in close coordination with the United Nations to provide protection for civilians in the Darfur region, which has led to measurable improvements in the security of women and children and displaced populations.

48. Over the next three years the United Nations will work closely with partner organizations in the protection of civilians. The objective is a consultative network with interested partner organizations to identify options for a common framework on protection of civilians in armed conflict, based on agreed core policies and legal elements.

49. This activity will support a series of workshops focusing on protection, with the aim of defining the roles of regional and subregional organizations, and identifying areas where they need specific capacity-building support. The first will be held in Dakar in early 2007, hosted by the Government of Senegal in collaboration with the Special Representative of the Chairman of the African Union Commission for the protection of civilians, and supported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office.

Natural disaster relief

50. Disasters are often regional in scale, and therefore require regional efforts to reduce risk. In order to ensure coherence and complementarity at the global level, I request that regional organizations, which have a critical role to play in humanitarian and emergency relief operations, coordinate closely with the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator. This is necessary to ensure that collective efforts meet internationally agreed guidelines and methodologies, benefit from lessons learned and best practices, avoid competition for resources or collision of mandates and ultimately build effective partnerships.

51. Regional networks can play an important role in the following ways: sharing and harmonizing best practices; facilitating coordination between national disaster agencies; engaging in regional training and exercises; providing additional local capacity; leveraging disaster response on national political agenda, including disaster mitigation work; advocating regional concerns at the international level; and pooling resources in order to provide immediate logistical support after a disaster.

52. In addition to these ongoing efforts with regional organizations to strengthen natural disaster preparedness and response, I plan to build on existing regional

disaster response mechanisms and to ensure that disaster response mechanisms are developed in organizations where they do not exist. This will include increasing regional capacities, the development of standby and deployment capacity and developing cooperation and coordination mechanisms.

E. Progress in realizing the goals of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005)

53. In its resolution 1631 (2005), the Council expressed its determination to take appropriate steps to the further development of cooperation between the United Nations and partner organizations in maintaining peace and security. The Council identified the following areas for specific action:

(a) Standby arrangements

54. Paragraph 1 of the resolution invited regional and subregional organizations that have the capacity for peacekeeping to place such capacities under the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS).

55. At the global level UNSAS includes a list of capabilities that could be deployed at short notice to United Nations missions (30-90 days). UNSAS has functioned as a mechanism to submit information on national capabilities, which is regulated through a generic memorandum of understanding signed between the United Nations and Member States. To increase the effectiveness of UNSAS, particularly urgent rapid deployment requirements, the Secretariat is reviewing the system with a view to its possible adaptation.

56. At the regional level it is only in Africa that arrangements for standby peacekeeping forces are currently under way. The AU is planning to develop an African standby force by 2010, based on five subregional brigades of between 3,500 and 5,000 troops each. Whether such a regional standby arrangement might feasibly be transferable to UNSAS needs more discussion.

57. Meanwhile, some regional or other intergovernmental organizations undertake peacekeeping operations within their regions on an ad hoc contributing basis, using national contingents (CIS in Tajikistan, 1993, and Georgia, 1994; EU in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 2003, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2004; and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in Solomon Islands, 2003). The EU has contributed, under Security Council authorization, to a peacekeeping force beyond its region (Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2003), as has NATO (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1995; Kosovo, 1999; and Afghanistan, 2003).

58. The Secretariat is exploring with regional organizations that have peacekeeping capacities the possibility for greater knowledge and information-sharing on respective capabilities and the potential interest of regional organizations to participate in United Nations peacekeeping missions. This work will continue with all of our relevant partners.

(b) Rapid deployment

59. The 2005 World Summit Outcome and paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) stressed the importance of enhanced rapidly deployable capacities to reinforce United Nations peacekeeping operations in crises. Member

States pointed to the potential assistance that might be provided in this area by regional organizations as well. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations has also requested the Secretariat to continue to develop options for enhanced rapidly deployable capabilities, one of which is engaging regional capacities in short-term support of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

(c) Small arms and light weapons

60. Paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) stressed the potential role of regional and subregional organizations in addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Within the global framework of the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the United Nations has increased its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Arab region, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean to curb the illicit trade through preventing their illicit production and trafficking, their holding and transfer, weapons collection and destruction and their control in post-conflict situations.[13]

(d) Counter-terrorism

61. Paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) urged all regional and subregional organizations to enhance the effectiveness of their counter-terrorism efforts. At the global level the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has been monitoring implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), facilitating delivery of technical assistance and best practices. CTED has been working on the involvement of regional organizations in this process. It has been cooperating, for instance, with OSCE, NATO, ASEAN, EU, the Council of Europe, IGAD, AU, PIF and the International Organization of la Francophonie. A number of regional conferences have been organized and the next one is planned for early 2007.

62. A special aspect of the implementation of counter-terrorism relates to the protection of human rights. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) convened a working group composed of United Nations and regional organizations to discuss universal and regional approaches to counter-terrorism and human rights. The working group agreed on further developing exchanges on counter-terrorism measures and human rights and, to that end, saw merit in instituting a flexible mechanism of interaction between the United Nations and regional organizations.

63. To sharpen the discussion on the protection of human rights in counter-terrorism measures, OHCHR and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights will host an expert workshop on human rights and international cooperation in the context of counter-terrorism. OHCHR is also developing a number of tools to assist our partners in the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

[13] General Assembly resolution 56/24.

(e) Capacity-building assistance

64. Paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) urges all Member States and relevant international organizations to help strengthen the capacity of regional and subregional organizations through human, technical and financial assistance. The focus of such assistance is to be on conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict stabilization.

65. Most assistance is directed to Africa. In April 2004 the European Union approved the Peace Facility for Africa for a three-year period from its entry into force, with the purpose of financing costs incurred by peacekeeping forces (items such as troop transport, living expenses and development of capabilities). The first mission benefiting from the Facility is the African Union Mission in the Sudan.

66. The 2005 World Summit Outcome has called for a 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union.[14] The United Nations is responding to immediate requests from the AU for assistance and is following up on the series of workshops it has held in Addis Ababa. A technical mission visited the AU in June this year and a legal team visited in July to assist in the completion of memoranda of understanding and status of forces agreements. The medium-term focus is on building institutional capacity, including the civilian dimension of the standby force arrangement. The long-term focus is on improving managerial capacity and the strengthening of the standby forces themselves by 2010.

67. Cooperation between the United Nations and the AU has developed over the years with assistance provided first to the Organization of African Unity Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and to the design and implementation of the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council, including training. Similar partnerships have also been developed in the areas of human rights, development and humanitarian affairs.

68. Consultations at the policy level have also intensified between the United Nations, its agencies and partners and the African Union. The recent visit to the African Union Commission by the delegation of the Security Council was not only historic, but also most useful in giving fresh impetus to United Nations-AU cooperation.

69. I have decided to dispatch an interagency mission to the African Union to firm up strategic priorities within the 10-year plan. The plan should be conceived as the United Nations overall strategic framework for cooperation and coordination with the African Union. It should therefore cover all aspects of assistance, including but not limited to: political and electoral matters, governance, human rights and the rule of law, peacebuilding, recovery and food security.

70. Assistance from the international community to other regional organizations is more limited. Japan has committed substantial amounts to PIF over the next three years for economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and civilian exchanges. It also contributes on a project basis to OAS for peacebuilding missions such as electoral assistance. The United States contributes financial assistance to IGAD and ECOWAS for the development of their early warning mechanisms, while the United Kingdom, Canada and Denmark contribute to human resource development of the ECOWAS secretariat. The EU contributes under the ECOWAS-

[14] General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 93.

EU-United Nations Office for West Africa framework of action for peace and security.

III. Challenges facing cooperation

71. As the above review has shown, the past 12 years have seen an increasing awareness of the importance, indeed the imperative, of strengthening the regional-global partnership, and an intensifying effort to realize that goal. Nonetheless, there is, in my view, much to be done before the objective is reached. Two important challenges — clarifying the roles and building the capacities — are discussed below.

A. Clarifying the roles

72. There are many instances in past crises when a number of organizations, all with well-meaning intent, have acted at cross purposes in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. This has at times resulted in a lack of coordination to the point of confusion on the part of the international community. The Security Council itself has, on occasion, been concerned to call for effective coordination to ensure a clearer collective effort.

73. Clarification is needed in specific situations when the distribution of labour should be accurately defined but the reality speaks otherwise. However, this clarification also pertains to our regular policy-oriented meetings at the level of heads of organizations, whether convened by the Security Council or myself.

74. This applies to both membership and mandate. As noted earlier, the number of organizations attending the high-level meetings that my predecessor and I have convened has grown considerably — from 10 in 1994 to 20 in recent meetings — and the number is likely to increase further. While this development is welcome in terms of significance of interest and importance attached to the task, it increases the need for greater clarity of role.

Areas and scope of partnerships

75. The first requirement is to clarify the mechanism for strengthening the partnership — the mandate of the process itself. To date the high-level meetings have focused on the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council meetings, by their very nature, have done the same. There have recently been calls for the scope of the meetings to be broadened to include economic, social and cultural areas. The 2005 World Summit Outcome also called for strengthening our cooperation in these areas as well.[15]

76. Even within the scope of peace and security there is an increasing number of organizations that already have, or that are according themselves, a mandate in peace and security. It is possible that the partnership could grow to include 30 or more organizations wishing to be involved in the dual process.

[15] General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 170 (c).

Regional versus other intergovernmental organizations

77. Another issue of importance for the future concerns the identification of regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations within the partnership with a view to determining a division of labour based on their comparative advantages. This is a complex issue. The concept of a region has never been clarified, neither during the framing of the Charter nor since. A draft definition of a regional agency proposed at the San Francisco Conference was rejected on the view that it might unduly restrict the need for flexibility.

78. However, taking the region as a basis for strengthening the relationship with the United Nations, the General Assembly, in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, declared:

> "We support a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter, and therefore resolve:
>
> "(a) To expand consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations through formalized agreements between the respective secretariats and, as appropriate, involvement of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council ...".[16]

79. The Summit therefore took regional and subregional organizations as partners for a strengthened relationship with the United Nations. But our cooperation covers many other intergovernmental organizations as well. In the light of the views and recommendations expressed at the highest level, I believe that we might consider taking the regional-global security partnership to a new level of clarity, practicality and seriousness.

80. There was a reason Chapter VIII was drafted by the Charter's framers and that reason is as valid today as it was 61 years ago. It is to ensure that global and regional collective security is mutually complementary and that the total effort of the international community for securing the peace is optimized through the collaboration of our various international organizations.

81. In addition to regional organizations, it will be of practical sense to identify also the subregional organizations within the partnership. Although the Charter is silent on this matter, it has always been clear to me and my colleagues that the provisions of Chapter VIII imply that subregional organizations are to be included. The nature of the relationship between regional and subregional organizations itself may require greater clarity in the future. This is particularly complex, given the relationship between a regional organization and its subregional partners, on one hand, and between the United Nations and both entities, on the other hand. But we shall benefit to the extent that such clarity is achieved.

82. These reflections are not, of course, designed to exclude other organizations within the partnership which might not see themselves as falling within the scope of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Other provisions such as those of Chapters VI, VII and IX are applicable to these partners for the same roles. So none is excluded, and each has a role to play within the partnership. The question could be asked, however,

[16] General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 170 (a).

whether the partnership would be operationally more effective if each partner knows under which Charter provisions it is functioning.

83. The need for a simple and effective identification of partners is, in fact, already recognized in the work of the United Nations. In his report submitted to the Council in response to its request, my predecessor noted that the United Nations had encouraged a "rich variety of complementary efforts" in forging a partnership between regional arrangements and agencies and the United Nations in maintaining the peace. Just as no two regions or situations were the same, so the design of cooperative work and its division of labour needed to be adapted to the realities of each case with flexibility and creativity.[17] The General Assembly Declaration, for its part, noted, inter alia, that regional arrangements or agencies could make important contributions to peace and security "in their fields of competence and in accordance with the Charter".[18]

84. For its part, the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change recommended that consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should be expanded and could be formalized in an agreement, covering such issues as meetings of the heads of the organizations, more frequent exchange of information and early warning, co-training of civilian and military personnel, and exchange of personnel within peace operations.[19] Commenting on the relevance of the Charter to our respective roles, the Panel said that interested regional and subregional organizations will pursue joint activities under Chapter VIII, while other intergovernmental organizations will partner with the United Nations under the other Charter provisions.

B. Building the capacity

85. Even in a future situation in which the various roles of partner organizations are clarified, the partnership will not be effective if the vast discrepancy in the capacities of the regional and other organizations around the world is allowed to continue. From the preliminary survey of the capacities of all regional and other organizations carried out by the United Nations University in 2005 and 2006, it became clear that their capacities — whether organizational, operational or resources — are vastly discrepant.[20] This needs to be rectified if a genuinely uniform regional input into the global mechanism is to be achieved. However, United Nations capacity to assist capacity-building of partner organizations should also be enhanced.

86. It is well recognized that, of all regions, Africa is in the greatest need. This was noted by the General Assembly, which in the 2005 World Summit Outcome agreed on a 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union. It is not repudiation of that judgement to recognize that some other regional and intergovernmental organizations also are in need of assistance to build their own capacities.

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[17] A/47/277-S/24111, para. 62.

[18] General Assembly resolution 49/57, annex, para. 2.

[19] A/59/565, annex I, 86 (b).

[20] Capacity Survey, United Nations University Comparative Regional Integration Studies programme, June 2006, Bruges, Belgium.

IV. Opportunities for cooperation

87. During the Council's thematic debate in July 2004, the Prime Minister of Romania, in his capacity as Council President, expressed the conviction that cooperation under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides enormous opportunities. I agree. The scope for optimizing the resources and stimulating the political will of the international community in serving peace and security through an effective operational partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is vast; and the time is also ripe. That is why we agreed upon the vision of a regional-global security partnership at the fifth high-level meeting.

88. What, specifically and in practical terms, might such an opportunity mean? Overall, it means that the international community stands to benefit in the maintenance of peace and security from a balance between the intimate knowledge of a conflict situation possessed by a regional organization and the global legitimacy and authority of the Security Council. More specifically, it might mean two things. First, that the global security mechanism of the future rests on a balanced distribution of capacity and resources across all regions around the world. This will relieve certain regions and alliances of the burden they face at present, financial and human, and the risks they confront, political and military, in undertaking the principal responsibility for maintaining peace and security. Secondly, the Security Council must always retain primary responsibility for that task, but, within that context, it should be able to rely upon, and should seek, a willing and capable subsidiary role on the part of regional and other intergovernmental organizations in peace and security from every region of the world, without exception.

A. Constitutional process

89. The opportunities for partner organizations to cooperate with the United Nations in a more formalized way, as called for in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, might be facilitated by an understanding of the constitutional basis of each partner and thus the relationship between it and the United Nations. Most, not all, partner organizations were created on the basis of formal instruments, and their founding documents have accorded them, explicitly or implicitly, legal personality. Others were founded on declarations or communiqués and are not legal entities but rather regional or other arrangements. Some of these have moved or are moving towards the adoption of formal agreements establishing themselves as fully fledged international organizations with legal empowerment. Others have judged it preferable to remain as informal arrangements.

90. It is, of course, for each partner to determine for itself the nature of its own entity, what formal empowerment it possesses in law, and what role it wishes to play in partnership with the United Nations. For my part, I welcome all partner organizations in the maintenance of peace and security. It is simply worth noting, in this context, that the move to conclude a more formalized agreement with the United Nations will have implications for the legal aspect of each relationship.

B. Operational mechanism

91. The description in section II.D of the present report of the current operational cooperation between the United Nations and partner organizations shows that considerable synergy and sharing of experience and effort can be extracted from the overall partnership if the institutional will exists on all our parts. But those areas of cooperation that have been developed in an ad hoc manner remain rather haphazard in our collective contribution to a global-regional mechanism in peace and security.

92. The opportunity still exists before us to complete the historic process from a collective security of 60 years ago in which the United Nations maintained a fledgling capacity to deal with threats to the peace, on its own without partners, to today's envisioned scenario of a fully fledged and truly effective mechanism for global-regional cooperation. While this might still be an idealistic vision, it has to be our ultimate goal. As I have sought to make clear in this section and in sections II and III above, however, the challenges of a lack of coordination, clarity of roles and lack of capacity of our various organizations must be overcome for these opportunities to be realized. My recommendations below are submitted in this spirit.

V. Recommendations

93. In the present report I have sought to describe the development of the partnership that the United Nations has developed with regional and other intergovernmental organizations and to offer some analysis of the challenges faced and opportunities before us. In the light of the considerable progress, but also many remaining problems described in the present report, I submit for the consideration of the Security Council, and the General Assembly as appropriate, the recommendations set out below.

Conflict prevention (see paras. 20-26 above)

94. To strengthen our cooperation in conflict prevention:

(a) The United Nations should strengthen its capacity to develop a global-regional mechanism of conflict prevention with which comparable mechanisms at the regional and subregional levels can interact. In order to be effective and sustainable, our approach to prevention should be truly comprehensive. The contributions of development and other programmes of the United Nations and participating organizations should be gradually integrated into the work of peace and security sectors and new modalities for joint operational cooperation should actively be pursued in building national, regional and global capacities for conflict prevention;

(b) A databank on conflict prevention capacities of partner organizations and the United Nations system should be established by the United Nations as a foundation for such a mechanism;

(c) A series of workshops should be convened, jointly hosted by the United Nations and partner organizations, as already proposed, on lessons learned in conflict prevention and in building the global-regional mechanism;

(d) Current United Nations desk-to-desk consultations with the EU, the Council of Europe and OSCE could be a model for new types of dialogues on conflict prevention between other interested organizations and the United Nations;

(e) The Security Council could consider making conflict prevention a special aspect of its interaction with regional organizations in its future meetings;

(f) A dedicated research capacity should be established, to be shared by both the partner organizations and the United Nations, to advance our joint lessons-learned capacity in the field;

(g) There is also a growing need to promote greater recognition of the role of human rights in conflict prevention and early warning.

Peacemaking (see paras. 27-32 above)

95. To strengthen our cooperation in peacemaking:

(a) Regional and other relevant intergovernmental partners, including donors, should support the regional consultations now in the active planning stage by the Department of Political Affairs;

(b) Partner organizations should become active users of, and contributors to, the peacemaking databank of the Department of Political Affairs.

Peacekeeping (see paras. 33-38 and 54-59 above)

96. To strengthen our cooperation in peacekeeping:

(a) Interested regional organizations are invited to actively explore their inclusion in, and submit data on their capabilities to, the revised United Nations Standby Arrangements System;

(b) The Security Council could consider whether an identical standby arrangement system for both regional and global purposes might be desirable and feasible, based on a study submitted to the Council.

Peacebuilding (see paras. 39-41 above)

97. The Security Council could consider ways and means by which partner organizations can contribute to the Peacebuilding Commission and peacebuilding in general.

Disarmament and non-proliferation (see paras. 42-46 and 60 above)

98. To improve the effectiveness and ensure greater impact of disarmament and non-proliferation activities undertaken at regional and subregional levels, the United Nations should:

(a) Strengthen its cooperation with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to further implement the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, in particular to facilitate and promote programmes of technical assistance and international cooperation, as requested;

(b) Strengthen its efforts to promote the universalization and full implementation of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and other

politically binding instruments through the establishment of regional integrated databases;

(c) Hold a series of workshops, in collaboration with regional and other intergovernmental organizations, with a view to raising awareness and, as appropriate, facilitating the provision of assistance and cooperation to strengthen States' capacity to implement their obligations under Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), as well as experience-sharing and lessons learned in the areas covered by those resolutions.

Clarification of roles (see paras. 72-84 above)

99. With a view to clarifying the nature of the overall partnership, the Security Council could:

(a) Consider and elaborate on the new challenge regarding the scope of our cooperation with regional and other intergovernmental organizations;

(b) Pronounce on the desirability and implications of quantitative expansion of our partners in the global-regional mechanism;

(c) Discuss the desirability and practicability of partner organizations identifying themselves either as regional organizations acting under Chapter VIII or as other intergovernmental organizations acting under other provisions of the Charter.

Guidelines for cooperation (see paras. 6-18 above)

100. With a view to bringing together the results of the previous Security Council meetings and high-level meetings to date, the Council could recognize the various guidelines that have already been agreed upon, such as the supremacy of the Charter in governing the partnership, the primary responsibility of the Council in international peace and security, the need for consistency and impartiality by both the United Nations and all partner organizations, the need for flexibility and pragmatism, and the need for the partnership to reflect the comparative advantage of all, developing an effective division of labour in our operational collaboration. Identifying these standards would, I suggest, clarify our roles and improve our collective effectiveness in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Formalization of the partnership (see paras. 78, 84, 89 and 90 above)

101. With a view to moving towards the realization of the World Summit call, I invite partner organizations that plan to initiate a formal agreement with the United Nations, in accordance with the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/60/1, para. 170) to express this wish to me in writing. As a practical initial step, partner organizations may wish to consider agreement on a general statement of principles, which could provide a guiding mechanism for future collaboration with and between all signatories and the United Nations.